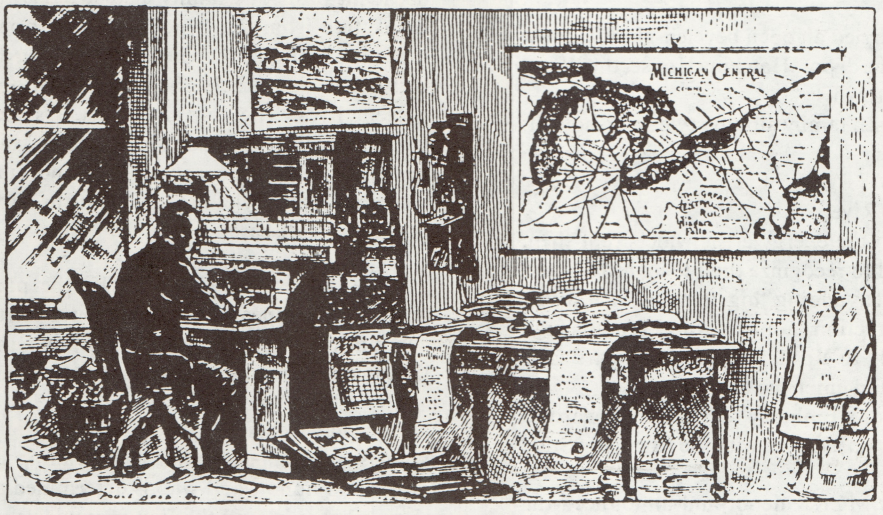
August 1988

Depot Town Rag

FREE 100% RAG CONTENT

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198



The above etching was often used in the Michigan Central's brochures in its earlier days. The plinth-framed oil painting of a train passing Niagara Falls now hangs above The Rag *editor's roll-top desk across the street from Ypsilanti's depot. The litter on the floor looks as much like a press room as it does a station master's office. The only thing missing is the computer.*

You can find Ypsilanti — and all the other depots on the line — in the MCRR map to the right of the oil painting.

Another Sesquicentennial

150 years of trains to Ypsilanti's Depot Town!

Michigan's first train, on the Erie & Kalamazoo line, was a passenger train — or, rather, a train that carried passengers. The E & K and its successors continued passenger service for a hundred and twenty years until November 19,1956. Later in starting but more durable, is the route from Detroit to Chicago over the old Michigan Central line.

On February 3, 1838, the State of Michigan began service between Detroit and Ypsilanti, now the route of fast Amtrak equipment. The following May 3, the Detroit & Pontiac began operating trains between Detroit and Royal Oak on what is now the Grand Trunk Western's line. These two runs are the oldest continuously-operated passenger services in the nation west of the Alleghenies, remarkable for the state that put the nation on the highways. (Historical Society of Michigan)

August 26, 27, 28

Festival Facts

Depot Town events elaborated herein:

Here today, here tomorrow

For the last ten years, *The Depot Town Rag* has been reporting all the progress in between Festivals as if our readers hadn't been following Depot Town's efforts during the rest of the year. The fact that we don't have to do that any more does not imply that the work is all done. It simply means that we aren't tourists any longer. We're all here all year. And so are you. The good old days *are* here again. And we're in it together!

The 10th annual

Heritage Festival - *an overview*

When the first Ypsilanti Yesteryear Heritage Festival began in 1979, the City Manager and the Chief of Police were amazed that it drew more than 35,000 people. Ypsilanti had already established its Historic District, and many of the 19th Century buildings were beginning to see some quality restoration work done, but no one believed that many people would turn out to see all that 'old stuff' in a three-day celebration.

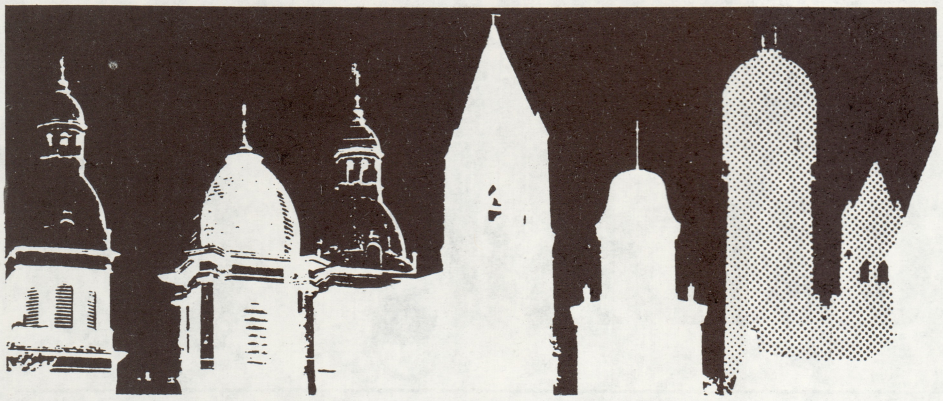
Since that first relatively small start the Festival planners have dropped the 'Yesteryear' from the name and have added such huge attractions as the world-famous Wallenda-Zoppe high wire artists to their list of attractions which now draw an annual crowd of over a quarter of a million people from around the nation — but the hometown flavor remains. The late August event now is seen as a great opportunity for every non-profit organization in the area to focus their activity and make themselves known to the rest of the world.

The Heritage Parade is one of the most authentic assemblages of historic music, vehicles and costumes in the country and is a capsulized rendition of the rest of the three-day extravaganza.

Even with a ten-year history of celebrating the old way of doing things, there are still new/old events and exhibitions being added to the Festival. New this year are:

-Antique Farm Tractors and Implement Display
-Antique Fire Fighting Apparatus
-Starlight Street Dance featuring the Saline Big Band
-The Rubber Ducky Floatation race.

Ypsilanti enjoys an active and creative citizenry, with more than one hundred people serving on the year-long planning committee for the event and thousands more folks participating through their clubs, churches and organizations to host this outstanding celebration of the 'good old days'. Some say, with community spirit like this, the 'good old days' may still be here.



Highlights of 10 Years of Festivals in Ypsilanti

The poster advertising Ypsilanti's festival in 1979 carried an open beveled-glass window as its logo — surrounded by six sepia-toned photos of the depot, Hawkins House, the Water Tower and other ancient edifices still recognizable in town.

Subsequent posters followed the old photo theme with family album-style snapshots of:

-a picnic in Riverside Park aroung 1890

-a family posing in and around their new 1918 auto

-a 19th Century canoeing expedition on the Huron River

Small town America was celebrating, partly due to the energy crisis which kept them closer to home, but partly, too, in response to the need to recognize their local history and roots. Ypsilanti kept featuring its rich histroy — as well as adding "big items" to its festival. By this time, the Wallendas had become a regular attraction, not as a world famous high wire act, but as another family that returned regularly to Ypsilanti. Over the years their Ypsilanti friends have watched their family grow up and enter the act.

The 1983 Festival saw the awarding of the Governor's Embassy of Tourism Award to Ypsilanti for its excellent regional celebration, now seen in a league with the Michigan State Fair and other major Michigan tourist destinations.

1985's advertising celebrated the original Ypsilanti MCRR depot and announced the Governor's Award and a Special Award in Community Achievement from the Greater Michigan Foundation.

Not at all puffed-up with pride from such recognition, the Festival next featured Miss Lucille Langworthy, a teacher from EMU's old Roosevelt School, in a childhood photo as the Victorian poster design for 1986.

Michigan's Sesquicentennial officially sanctioned the Festival in 1987 and the year's advertising featured a patriotic red, white, and blue 1920's touring car motif (from Camp Photo in Ypsilanti) with the Sesqui-emblem on its spare tire cover. "We're going to the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival." the banner proclaimed, and just about everyone did.

Promotion for the 10th Festival focuses upon the stately towers of this old city and can communicate on another level, as well — Ypsilanti has truly become a towering tourist attraction in its ten years of authentic hometown celebration.

Co-op's Quilt a feature

Only six drawings are pemitted in the Heritage Festival and they include items as far-ranging as $2500 in the Rubber Ducky Race to a new Corvette or Lincoln in the Chamber of Commerce raffle. Vietnam Vets, the Lions Club and the Historical Society also have approval and licensing to run raffles during our big weekend in August. But the Amish Quilt that's been a-building over on River Street these last few months at the Ypsilanti Food Co-op promises to be one of the highlights of this year's Festival.

Many summer mornings have seen the stitchers sitting with the fabric on their knees, sewing in the hot sun. It's a lovely design and will be on exhibit at the Co-op until the drawing — on the Riverside Park dock/stage at the end of Festival at 5 p.m. Sunday, August 28th.

Serenity House sponsors Circus

Frog Island will again be the site of the Franzen Brothers' big top and Depot Town's Serenity house continues to offer special-rate tickets until August 25th.

Performances are Friday at 5:30 & 8 p.m., Saturday at 2 & 4:30 p.m., and Sunday at 1:30 & 4 p.m.

Advance sales tickets (children under 14 and seniors $3, adults $5) are available the Chamber of Commerce office, The Teachers Shop, and Dave's Plaster Craft shop until August 25. After that, they're available at the big top entrance during the Festival at $4 and $6.

Elephant rides will be available all through the Festival.

Victorian "Ghosts" return to the area

Ypsilanti's Cross Street Art Ensemble will present Henrik Ibsen's Ghosts at St. Luke's Episcipal Church (120 North Huron Street) on Friday and Saturday, August 12, 13, and Friday and Saturday, August 19, and 20 at 9 p.m. Tickets are $5 general and $4 for students and seniors.

The play deals with the Alving family's tragic attempts to free themselves from the "ghosts" of the deceased Captain Alving's decadent past. The family also struggles to break free from the hypocritical Victorian moral coventions that necessitate lying to themselves and others about their past and present lives. The son and artist, Osvald, yearns for "the sun" and "the joy of life," but because the Victorian society offers nothing resembling the joy of life, his joy turns from creativity to disease.

Pious critics were incensed by the play when it first appeared; one called it a "dirty act done publicly." In hindsight, though, the fierceness of Ibsen's moral intention is clear.

The play bears the mark of a playright who is angered at decadence parading as virtue and honor, and who is determined to show what is behind the Victorian ideals.

The play is much more than a message, too; it is laced with humor and suspense as well as tragedy. It all adds up to what one critic called "the most important play of the 19th Century."

The Cross Street Art Ensemble is made up of Andy Callis, Neil Alting, Mary-Margaret Clennon, Tim Benjamin, and Camille Severensen, all of Ypsilanti, and Tim Cooper of Ann Arbor.

For more information, call 483-4016.

"The Mean Bean"
at 17 East Cross
in historic
Depot Town

Depot Doo
Fine Design in
Hair Style
25 East Cross • 484-3045

Heritage Jazz Competition

The Jazz Competition revives an old tradition — the cutting contest — and puts it in a brand new setting. Young, semi-professional musicians from across the state of Michigan converge on a big tent in Ypsilanti's Depot Town during the Heritage Festival. They bring their hopes and their most practiced tunes with them to engage in two days of musical dueling. Sixteen different bands performing swing, bebop, big band music and more modern styles of jazz, compete in from of a panel of judges, a tentful of people and a live radio audience which listens to the proceedings on WEMU, Eastern Michigan University's all-jazz radio station.

Some bands compete for the cash prizes — over $1400 will be given away to the best groups. Others compete for scholarships to the Berklee College of Music, which this year has made $5000 in tuition waivers available. Besides the cash and scholarships, the best bands are vying for gigs at local jazz spots in Ann Arbor and Detroit. And all contestants are looking for more exposure, experience in a challenging performance situation and recordings of those performances which can be used as 'demo tapes' in their search for other gigs.

The Jazz Competition is a unique event produced by two organizations —WEMU and the Depot Town Association. WEMU provides the musical and technical expertise, as well as promotion of the event. The DTA provides a crew to keep the refreshments flowing at the cash bar under the big tent.

The Jazz Competition is fun — it often provides Heritage Festival-goers with their first exposure to this great American art form; and many find that they like what they hear, so they indeed stay for a while. The Friday and Saturday night shows close with some terrific dance music, provided by Detroit area professional bands working in a rhythm and blues or blues groove. So, while in some ways the purpose of the Jazz Competition is serious, the whole thing is quite a bit of fun.

Proceeds from sales at the cash bar and a $600 award from the Michigan Council for the Arts are the sole sources of income for this big, free, three-day show and live broadcast.

Volunteer beer-pourers needed

If we can pour enough of that Budweiser beer during the three days of Festival, we'll see the Anhueiser/Busch Clydesdales pulling their product down East Cross Street in the next Heritage Parade — with Depot Town's name on the wagon.

Carolyn McKeever is in charge of volunteers for the bar in the jazz tent for all three days. Let her know your willingness to help pay for this fine program by putting in a few hours in the cool jazz tent behind Aubree's Saloon.

Drop a note in her front door at 23 ½ East Cross or call her at 483-4265. This long weedend will take hundreds of hosts to make it work. Your help is both needed and appreciated.

Aubree's Saloon
& Second Floor
39 East Cross

Miller's
SINCE 1896
ICE CREAM
Open All Year!
42 E. CROSS
HISTORIC DEPOT TOWN

Old Town Restaurant
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
38 East Cross

YPSI FOOD COOP
WHOLE NATURAL FOOD IN BULK OR SMALL QUANTITIES
M.T.Th.F. 10-7 Wed. 10-9 312 N.River
483-1520 Sat. 9-7 Sun. 12-5

Sidetrack
Good Food, Good Drinks,
Good Times
56 East Cross 483-1053

at the
Ypsilanti Farmers Market
MESSINA'S CHEESE
459-1995

Red Rooster Pizza
37 E. CROSS
483-4555

Ypsilanti's Farmers' Market
in historic Depot Town
Every Wed. & Sat.
8 a.m. — 3 p.m.

What's new since last year's Festival?

Over 350,000 attended the ninth annual Heritage Festival. A parking lot was completed on the north side of Cross Street. The Engineering Society was formed to give jobs to neighborhood kids. Signs were in-stalled pointing here from the expressway. The 'tridge' opened for foot traffic.

The Fall Fair drew thousands to the Farmer's Market. Foundation bricks were replaced on the MCRR depot. The childrens' Halloween party drew 500 creatively costumed kids. New cornice, windows and paint appeared on Hansen's Standard Printing. *The Rag* ran a series of articles on local versions of the Michigan Sesquicentennial. Artists & Artisans were organized.

The interior of The Old Caboose was painted. A tanning booth opened at Depot Doo. 183,914 attended the second annual Festival of Lights. Depot Town lighted the tops of its buildings with strings of clear 5-watt bulbs. Volunteers were feted with a special Freight House jazz event. Liquor liability insurance rates sky-rocketed. The Winter Jazz Series filled the Freight House for three consecutive months.

Our Lady's Madrigal Singers performed for the third year. Gingerbread houses graced many shop windows. Three editions of a mysterious lampoon of *The Rag* appeared. The tower of the MCRR depot was rebuilt. *The Rag* published a seven-part series on the commercial Italianate architectural style. J & R Trading Post opened in the Follett House. Our sidewalks were the cleanest in the City.

Ypsi Opry presented Nashville's Billy Walker. The April *Rag* looked like *USA Today*, only dumber. The Mean Bean opened a classy Mexicanstyle restaurant. Famous movie and soap opera stars shopped the block. Red Rooster Dairy Bar and Pizzeria expanded to Depot Town. City Body tore off its first floor panelling and improved their rear parking. The City promised results on the north side alley survey by July. Miller's Ice Cream Parlor opened its south dining rooms. The Memorial Markers were placed on the Cross Street Bridge.

Serenity House/Hansen's created a posh new front entry. The Sidetrack closed for a week and a half to reorganize. Miller Motors carried diecast auto models. River Street was repaved and pedestrian crossing signals installed. Ypsilanti Food Co-op principals bought the Millworks building.

Frog Island saw its largest, hottest crowd and jazz program, ever. New outdoor telephones were installed. The Learning Center moved here. An automobile was driven across the 'tridge'. Center bollards were installed. Thompson Building Antiques Mall painted their facade. The Market Plaza Box Elder was cut down. Old paint was scraped from the Artrain Building — first of the 'new' breed of fifteen years ago. Flowers and trees died from the drought.

Thursday nights continued to be the time for neighborhood plotting and planning. Friday nights proved to be hardest to find a parking space. Some shops still open late on Saturday morning. We continue to eat with our hats on and wave from the windows of pick-up trucks. Same old stuff.

Patronize The Merchants That Bring You The

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Depot Town Rag

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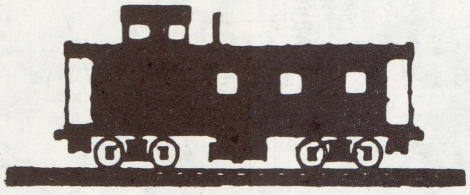
Standard Printing Company
35 E. Cross Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
483-0339



THE DEPOT TOWN RAG:

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc., a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.

The Depot Town Association, Inc.,
Tom Dodd, President
The Caboose, 400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

D.T.A. 21 July 1988

Guests - Jaqueline Brock, from Columbia Cable of Ann Arbor, gave a presentation on advertising options in their expanding viewer market. She will return for the October DTA meeting to follow up not only individual business interests, but also the possibility of an 'area imagery' spot.

Treasury - no report. Treasurer, Judy Monaghan, is recovering from surgery.

Standing Committee:

Membership/Volunteerism - Looking for some people to enjoy music — and pour a few beers at the WEMU Jazz Competition during Heritage Festival. Thanks for all the great help at Frog Island. To give some time, contact Carolyn @ 483-4256/

Caboose - For rent - a bargain @ any price. Only $25 per event, w/$10 key deposit. Contact Gary McKeever @ 483-4256.

Budget/Events - The Heritage Festival Committee refused previously effective alernative profit-sharing from the WEMU Jazz Competition/DTA beer tent, claiming the 10% of gross profit standard for other Heritage Festival paricipants. WEMU and DTA will split any remaining net profits.

NIFTY (New Initiative for Tourism in Ypsilanti) - no report.

2nd Vice Presidents:

Foundation - no report.

Merchants - the three-phase street lighting plan is in discussion with City and Detroit Edison officials.

Antique Engine Club - meets Thursday, 28 July at 7:30 p.m. Members will do final cleaning of yard behind The Teachers Shop after the meting to ger ready for the Heritage Festival Early Engine Expo.

Artist & Artisans - no report.

Antique Dealers - no report.

Engineering Society - Neighborhood kids are looking to 'conduct' a good business doing your odd jobs. Contact The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti MI 48198.

Other business:

The nominating committee was chosen for DTA officer elections to be held at Septembers' meeting. Any suggestions regarding nominations should be referred to **Judy Monaghan, Sandy French,** and **Loren Hansen.**

We are looking forward to the completion of the City's North-side alley survey. It is expected by the end of July and will hopefully inspire solutions to the dumpster eyesore and parking problems.

Golden Goose Award - to revovation inside and out - Shankwiler's Artrain building facelift and the spacious interiors at Miller's Ice Cream Parlor. Good Work.

August 26, 27, 28, 1988

Heritage Festival Events

in historic Depot Town —

- **Heritage Parade** ends here Saturday at 11:30 a.m.

- **Heritage Jazz Competition**
  The best new jazz artists competing for prized in the big cool tent along the tracks between Aubree's and the Freight House. Free
  Friday 1 p.m.-2 a.m.
  Saturday noon-a.m.
  Sunday 1 p.m.-6 p.m.

- **WEMU/DTA Beer Tent** with all that jazz next to the tracks.

- **Farm Toy Show & Sale**
  Examples of restored, customized and new farm toys in the Freight House.
  Saturday 1-9 p.m.
  Sunday 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

- **License Plate Exhibit & Slide Show**
  Dick Wiley's antique and Bi-Centennial license plate exhibit in the Freight House.
  Friday 6 p.m.
  Saturday 2 & 4 p.m.
  Sunday 2 & 4 p.m.

- **Antique Car Show and Special Interest Autos**
  Up and down East Cross Street from Huron Street to River Street. More cars in the Market Plaza.
  Saturday 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
  Sunday 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

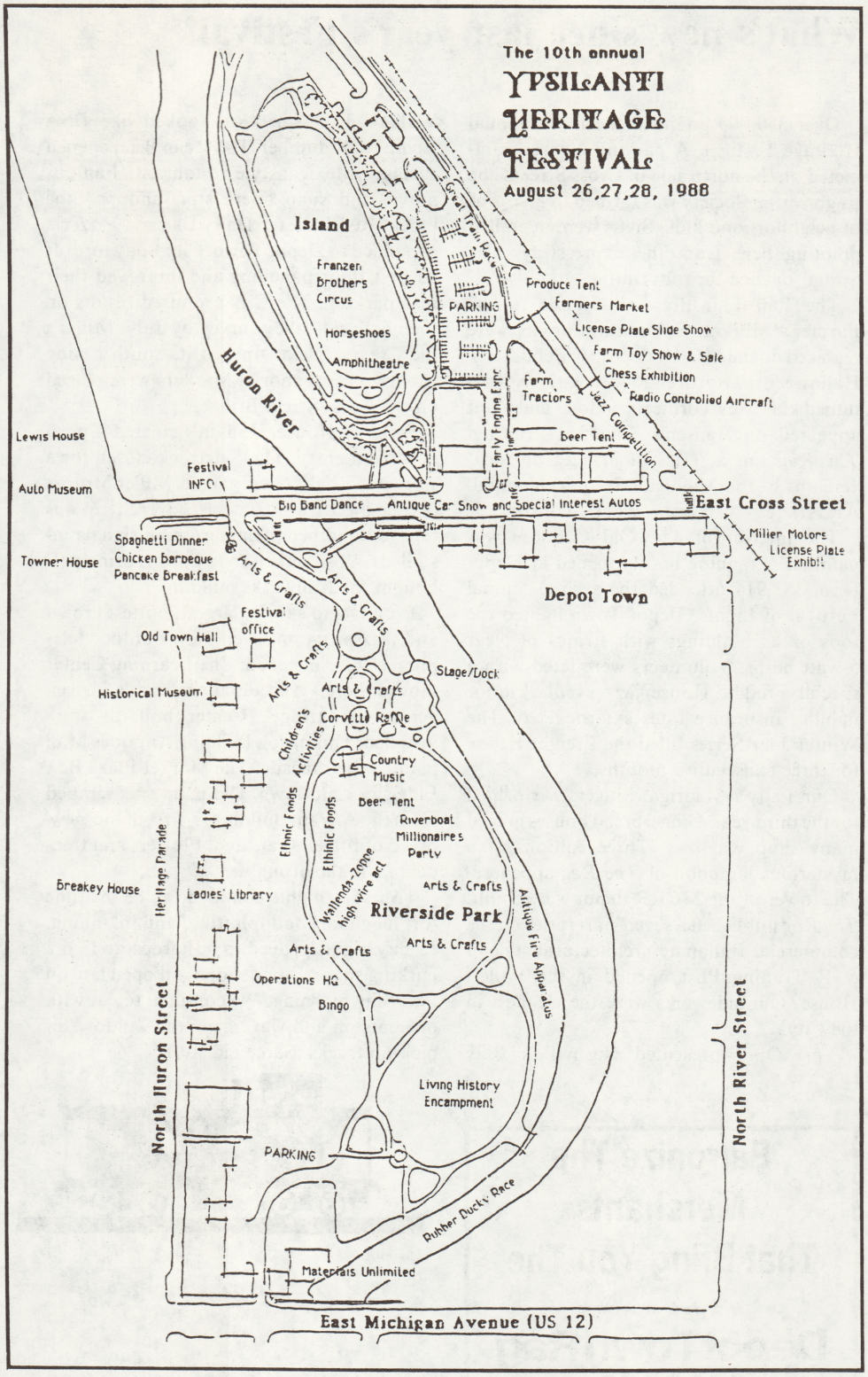
- **Farm Tractors**
  On the Market Plaza all day Saturday and Sunday.

- **Miller Motors,** world headquarters of Hudson/Essex/Terraplane Club.
  Friday 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
  Saturday 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
  Sunday 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

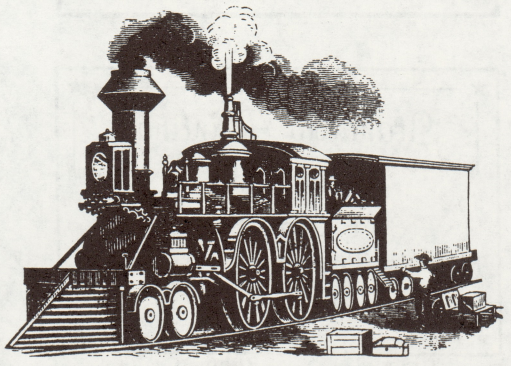
- **Early Engine Expo**
  -Sponsored by the Depot Town Antique Engine Club
  Working antique gas and steam engines on exhibit in Rice Street, next to the Old Caboose.
  Friday noon-6 p.m.
  Saturday noon-6 p.m.
  Sunday noon-6 p.m.

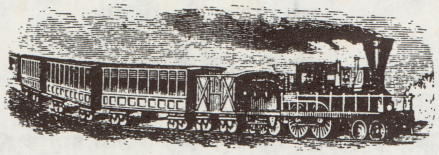
- **Farmer's Market**
  Fresh Michigan produce, plants, hand crafts, coffee shop. Market Plaza and Freight House. (An exciting attraction every Wednesday and Saturday all year 'round).
  Saturday 7 a.m.-3 p.m.

- **Professor Malarkey and his player piano**
  In front of # 19 East Cross all three days.



- **The Great Train Race** (starts in the Market Plaza),
  in which runners compete on a 6.2 mile (10K) road race and try to beat the Amtrak liner from Detroit. Cosponsored by Dairy Queen and the Depot Town Association.
  Sunday 8 a.m.





City Body, Inc.
20 East Cross

Front Alignments
Special - **$24.95**

City Radiator
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Tel. (313) 483-5870

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A Blend of Past & Present
With an Eye on The Future

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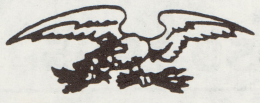


Olde Towne
Coin & Gold
24 E. CROSS STREET
YPSILANTI, MI 48198
(313) 483-6155

Big Bob's Magazines
Magazines, Comics, Posters
50 East Cross 485-4930

RAGTIME

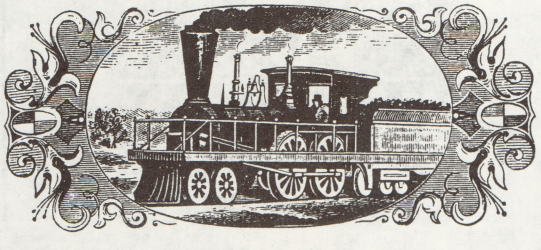
Three days of Disneyland
Down in Depot Town

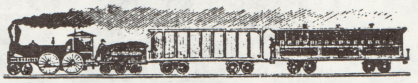
Ike's Depot
Town Barbershop
40 East Cross • 483-6300

RIVER ARTWORKS
CUSTOM FRAMING
DESIGNER MATS
48 E. CROSS
DEPOT TOWN
482-8785

Hon's
Flowers & Fancies
46 East Cross 482-2124

YPSILANTI RECYCLING PROJECT
651 Rice Street
(just north of the Farmers' Market
in Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town
Open every Saturday
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Collecting newspaper, glass,
used motor oil and ferrous cans
A non-profit organization





Peddler's Path
44 East Cross St.
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
(313) 482-1066
Country Accessories and Reproduction Furniture

Thompson Building Mall
Over 4000 square feet of dealers
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Something For Everyone
Cross Street Antiques
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Antiques Bought & Sold
Hours: Tues - Sun 11-5
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Apple Annie's
Vintage Clothing
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